

EXCEL Alaska Quarterly Newsletter - April 2018 Newsletter



We are three quarters of the way through the school year. Look what EXCEL Alaska students have accomplished!



EXCEL 7 January 23-26



Four days towards the end of January, nineteen 7th-graders were afforded the opportunity to find out what EXCEL Alaska is all about at *EXCEL 7*. The first in a series of six available foundational sessions, these students experienced how EXCEL can supplement the education they are receiving at their home schools. This introduction to leadership and team-building attributes gave the students a first glimpse into some very important employability skills. All these skills will be important to know as they build upon

them and master them as they progress through EXCEL Alaska's session, through the rest of their school careers; skills they can carry into the workforce and on through life.

Here's what kept them busy in the four productive days they were with us in Aniak, working on employability skills and finding out about jobs in their district and what people do in those jobs.

- Motivation/Rewards from Work
- Resiliency/Qualities for Success
- Teamwork/Compass Points
- Adaptability/Working Conditions
- Communication/Are You Listening?
- Integrity/Getting Fired from Work/School
- Stress/Coping Management
- Work Readiness Skills
- Toured Kuspuk School District Office
- Toured RAVN Alaska station in Aniak

Leadership * Career Exploration * Pre-employment Skills



Did you know? - All students going through EXCEL Alaska's program open an AKCIS ([Alaska Career Information System](#)) account and start a Personal Learning and Career Plan (PLCP). Having a PLCP is part of the state Workforce Development Plan. An AKCIS account is a free resource available to all Alaskan residents. AKCIS is a partnership between the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education ([ACPE](#)) and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development ([DOLWD](#)).



EXCEL 8 January 26-30

On the heels of the 7th-graders leaving their introduction to Leadership and Teamwork skills, eighteen 8th-graders moved in for the second of the foundational skills and their initial introduction to communication and consensus-building skills. With our teachers and instructors guiding them through *EXCEL 8* our students were introduced to these concepts and were able to add some additional knowledge about jobs in the region.

- Consensus Building/Working Well With Others
- Flexibility/Why go to college/trade school
- Teamwork/What are skills?
- Adaptability/Adapting to college/trade school
- Communication/Compass points/learning to listen
- Integrity/Learning styles survey



- Motivation/Team competitions
- Resiliency/Working together
- Stress/Coping Risks Factors
- Work readiness skills
- Toured Dave and Jacey Automotive
- Toured Aniak Sub-regional Clinic (YKHC)

Career Exploration * Employability Skills * PLCPs



Did you know? - The Alaska Performance Scholarship ([APS](#)) is an opportunity for Alaska high school students to earn a scholarship to help cover the cost of an Alaska post-secondary education. Qualified students can use the scholarship not only at colleges and universities, but at vocational/technical programs in the state as well.



EXCEL 10 February 1-8



The fourth in the series of foundational sessions, *EXCEL 10* is designed to give students a taste of different career industries to help them to think about their future career paths. Held in Anchorage, activities are designed to push students to step outside of their comfort zones and teach them to effectively communicate with adults and peers in business environments. Fourteen students attended this session and toured jobs at [GCI](#), [Providence Hospital](#), and [the Alaska Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory](#), and accomplished a great deal more!

Highlights of what the students completed:

- Drug and Alcohol Prevention Training and Effects on Babies
- Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training
- Job Application, Resume, Cover Letter, and Mock Interview
- Job tours at GCI, Providence Hospital, and The Alaska Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory
- Personal/social skills i.e. hand shakes, eye contact when speaking, and active listening
- Personal Learning Career Plan on [AKCIS](#)
- Alaska State Driver's Permits
- .5 high school elective credit in Career Development Life Work Planning.

Healthy Lifestyles * Driver's Licenses * Post-secondary Prep



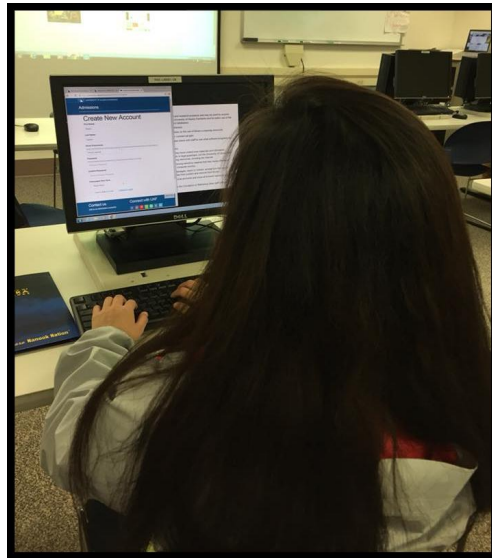
Did you know? - This 2017-2018 school year alone, EXCEL Alaska has served close to 250 students! We still have the rest of April through August to go, which puts us well on

our way to a record setting year, serving more students than ever! We thank all of you for your support and wish you the best ever for the coming summer season. (Unfortunately weather plagued our attendance in almost every session this spring, cutting numbers in the UAF Mini-Bridging, Intro to Aviation, and most of the foundational sessions.)



UAF Mini-Bridging February 12 - 16

Do you want to find out what being on a college campus is like? Well, that's just what our *Mini-bridging* sessions are designed to do! Students learn what it's like to be on a college campus, stay in dorms, fill out applications, visit classes, and more! This session, EXCEL Alaska took five students to UAF and accomplished so much! Unfortunately, we experienced very low attendance due to weather issues, grounding several flights out of villages and in to Fairbanks. The few who got there were treated like royalty and had an excellent experience.



Some of their accomplishments:

- Met with admissions and completed UAF application
- UAF main campus tour
- Pipeline Training Center tour for Welding and Process Technology
- Community & Technical College tour for Culinary Arts & Hospitality, Welding, Automotive Technology, Nursing, Information Technology, Construction Management, Aviation Maintenance, and Diesel/Heavy Equipment
- Tours of Fire Science and Paramedicine
- Met with a UAF student panel where students asked questions about UAF
- Sat in a BA 151 Intro to Business class
- Met with Rural Student Services advisors concerning classes for next year
- Sat for ACCUPLACER placement exam for writing
- Filled out UA Scholars application
- Learned about scholarship opportunities

Industry recognized certifications * Specialty Sessions



Did you know? - The UA Scholars program offers up to \$12,000 (\$1,500 per semester) to high school seniors who are designated by their high schools based on their academic standing. The scholarship can be used at any one of fifteen university campuses throughout the state, collectively offering over five hundred degrees and certificates.



EXCEL 10

February 22 - March 1



with adults and peers in business environments. Students went on job tours to GCI, Providence Hospital, and the Hilton Hotel.

We doubled up on *EXCEL 10* sessions this spring in order to accommodate students interested in the program. As before, the sessions are designed to push the students a little out of their comfort zones, find out about different industries, and build on the skills they learned in previous EXCEL sessions. This session specifically focuses on effective communication

On their list of accomplishments:

- Completed Drug and Alcohol Prevention Training and Effects on Babies
- Self Defense Class and Learning how to exercise correctly to improve their hearts
- Completed a Job Application, Resume, Cover Letter, and Mock Interview
- Job tours at GCI, Providence Hospital, and the Hilton Anchorage Hotel
- Learned personal social skill such as: Hand shakes, eye contact when speaking, and active listening
- Personal Learning Career Plan (PLCP) on AKCIS
- Alaska State Drivers Permits
- Earned .5 elective high school credit in Career Development Life Work Planning

Credit Recovery * Foundational Sessions * Budget Planning



Did you know? - In Alaska there are approximately 15,850 people who hold a Commercial Drivers' License (Class A CDL). Of those, just over 800 of them are women and two of those women are over 75 and two are just 21.



Industry Boot Camp/Driver's License School

March 20-21

EXCEL Alaska teamed up with Northern Industrial Training (NIT) to help high school seniors obtain their driver's licenses. The session started with students taking an 8-hour defensive driver training course followed by six hours of driving with an instructor one-on-one. During the driving, students learned how to maneuver the vehicle in and around other traffic, how



to enter and exit the highway, and safely drive in various weather conditions. Additionally, students learned how to parallel park. There was a total of 9 students enrolled, two of the of which were able to get their driver's license.

Meanwhile, running concurrently with the Driver's License course at NIT, the EXCEL Alaska/NIT partnership hosted a two-week *Heavy Equipment Boot Camp*, helping thirteen western Alaskan high-schoolers gain the necessary skills to be eligible for some of the most sought-after jobs in their regions, heavy equipment operators. Judging by the number of certificates earned, instructor and student surveys, and the width of the smiles of the students, the session was a huge success.

Students had the opportunity to learn how to safely operate the following equipment and gained certifications in:

- NCCER Compaction Equipment
- OSHA 10 (Hour) Construction
- ATSSA Flagger
- OSHA Forklift
- Front End Loader w/Forklift
- First Aid/CPR/AED
- Aerial Manlift

This fast, intensive training was designed to get students entry level positions in the construction industry. A few of the evenings were spent applying for jobs with construction companies. For example, Knik Construction, the company in charge of the new runway project in Aniak, was one of the companies whose applications students worked on along with other job openings these students are now eligible to fill.

Overall, this session was a huge success. EXCEL Alaska would like to graciously thank NIT for hosting the program and look to continue this growing partnership.

Job Skills * Mini-Bridging * Career Planning

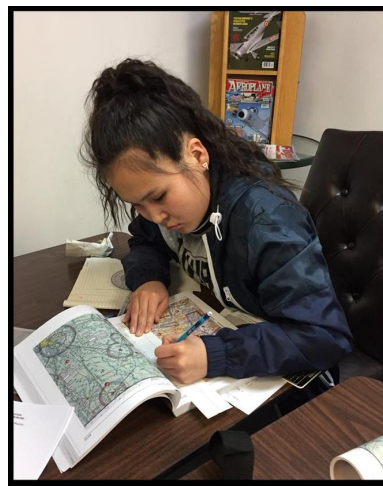


Did you know? - Alaska has more active pilots than any other state in the US. Statemaster.com defines an active pilot as "a person who holds a pilot certificate and a valid medical certificate issued within the last twenty five months." Alaska has more than three times the number of active pilots as Montana, a very distant second place.



Introduction to Aviation March 22-29

We just completed our first-ever *Introduction to Aviation* Session. This session was an enormous success and the students learned a great deal about the Aviation Industry. Students were introduced to the foundational concepts they will be required to master in order to pass the FAA written exam. Thirteen students attended this session. As the aviation industry is well aware, weather played a deciding factor in grounding flights from some of the villages, and student head count was reduced by eleven.



Below are some highlights from the session:

- Attended the Aviation Hall of Fame Banquet (Students were recognized by the MC)
- Toured the Alaska Airlines Maintenance Hanger
- Toured the UAA Aviation Program
- Practiced on the UAA Aviation Simulators
- Received .5 hours ground instruction with a CFI
- Received 1-hour flight time with CFI
- Received .5 High School elective credits in Introduction to Aviation

Life Skills * Career Exploration * Credit Recovery



Sessions in Process or Coming Soon!

We're rounding out the year! 4th quarter will find the EXCEL Alaska staff and students hard at work with the following:

- Post-secondary Prep and Credit Recovery Session - April 5-7
- EXCEL Mini Bridging Session Kenai Peninsula College and Alaska Christian College- April 9-13
- Academic & Trades Decathlon - May 1-4
- EXCEL Capstone - May 21-June 4 (by invitation)
- [Summer XL Camp](#) - June 3-30
- [Advanced Fish & Game Internship](#) - July
- [Math/Science Expedition](#) - August

For applications, click on the highlighted events. If you know of any students interested in applying for any of EXCEL's camps or sessions, please have them contact Tony at twilson@excelalaska.com



Look forward to more in the next EXCEL Newsletter!

In the meantime, keep up with us on [Facebook](#).

EXCEL Staff

- Carol Wilson - Executive Director
- Billijo Mills - Deputy Director
- Martha Peck - NYCP Industry & Community Outreach Manager
- Christa Wilson - Lead Teacher
- Tony Wilson - Lead Teacher
- Dyllon Mills - Instructor
- Jared Thorson - Instructor
- Carlene Liskey - Instructor
- Kattie Hoeldt - Instructor
- Walter Lee - Facilitator
- Konrad Kosciak - Facilitator
- Marquis Revels - Facilitator
- Tina Simpson - Cook

EXCEL Board of Directors:

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- Krystal Komkoff, Job Corps - Vice Chair
- Colin Stewart, LKSD - Treasurer
- Andrea Gusty, The Kuskokwim Corporation - Secretary
- Evelyn Pensgard, BNC - Member at Large

Advisory Board Members:

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- Meg Day, Donlin Gold
- Sue Hoeldt, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corp
- Brenda Pacarro, Calista Corporation
- Patty Woody, YKSD
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